

**For Immediate Release**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

The Georgia Child Fatality Review Panel submitted its 2002 Annual Report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and members of the Georgia General Assembly.

The report outlines the prevalence and circumstances of child deaths in Georgia, specifically those deaths that are preventable (unintentional and intentional injuries). This information is compiled from reports submitted by local county child fatality review committees. The Georgia Child Fatality Review Panel is charged with not only tracking the numbers and causes of child deaths, but also identifying and recommending prevention strategies that could reduce the number of child deaths.

According to the report, death certificates indicated that 1,799 children died in Georgia in 2001. Four hundred seventy-seven (477) of those deaths were due to injuries (372 unintentional and 105 intentional). The leading cause of unintentional injuries continues to be motor-vehicle incidents. Ninety-four (94) injuries were determined by child fatality review committees to be related to suspected or confirmed child abuse. Committees further reported that in 82% of child abuse related deaths, the child and/or family had prior involvement with at least one state or local agency.

The issue of preventability was addressed in 530 of the 537 child deaths reviewed by child fatality review committees. Committees determined 77% of those deaths to be definitely or possibly preventable.